



1. Project Data:		Date Posted : 03/25/2004	
PROJ ID: P010464		Appraisal	Actual
Project Name: District Primary Education Project	Project Costs (US\$M)	310.5	265.25
Country: India	Loan/Credit (US\$M)	260.3	229
Sector(s): Board: ED - Primary education (63%), Tertiary education (11%), Sub-national government administration (11%), Pre-primary education (9%), Central government administration (6%)	Cofinancing (US\$M)		
L/C Number: C2661			
	Board Approval (FY)		95
Partners involved :	Closing Date	03/31/2002	06/30/2003
Prepared by :	Reviewed by :	Group Manager :	Group:
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2. Project Objectives and Components

a. Objectives

The Project objectives were specified at the national, state and district levels :

National

1. Establish a fully functional DPEP Bureau for overall project management;
2. Provide technical assistance to states and districts for implementing project activities;
3. Set up a fully operational Educational Monitoring Information System (EMIS).

State (6)

1. Establish registered State Implementation Societies (SIS) to receive and manage project funds and manage project implementation;
2. Support state level technical institutions to manage textbook revisions;
3. Develop inservice training for teachers .

District (23)

1. Establish district project offices (DPOs);
2. Strengthen District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) and the provision of inservice training
3. Reduce disparities in access among gender and social groups to less than five percent;
4. Improve learning achievement by 25 percent over baseline;
5. Reduce dropout to less than 10 percent.

b. Components

The Project had three components:

1. Building national capacity (planned US\$20.5 million, actual US\$20.41 million, excluding contingencies)
2. Building state institutional capacity (planned US\$24.8 million, actual US\$24 million, excluding contingencies)
3. Improving quality and access in Primary Education (US\$225.1 million, actual US\$220.84 million, excluding contingencies)

c. Comments on Project Cost, Financing and Dates

The actual total expenditure under the Project was US\$ 265.25 million against an estimated sum of US\$310.5 million. The reduction was mainly due to reduced expenditures for educational materials in the goods category (the amount needed for books and learning materials was overestimated at appraisal by about US\$ 40 million), and the devaluation of the Indian currency from Rp 32 per US dollar to Rp 45. Need for investment in civil works was underestimated so the initial ceiling for this category of 24% was raised to 33%, and a higher share than planned was undertaken by community participation (actual 66% vs 49% planned). The Project closing date was extended 15 months beyond the original date.

3. Achievement of Relevant Objectives:

There were two kinds of objectives in the project, the first focused on institutional capacity building at the national, state and local levels, and the second on primary education quality and access . All of the capacity building objectives can be seen as supporting the educational quality and access objectives . Whereas there was less factual reporting of capacity in the ICR than might be expected, given the very specific targets placed in the SAR, it was clear that substantial progress in capacity building was achieved at all levels, except in the case of the District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) in many states. The quality and access objectives were three : reducing disparities in access, improving learning achievement, and reducing school drop -out:

Reducing disparities . Most (95%) of project districts girls reported an index of gender equity above 95%; overall the proportion of female to male participation increased from 45.6% to 47.8%; there were enrollment increases for scheduled caste and tribe children but no change in disparity figures were reported . Whereas the SAR calls for an increase in 1,400,000 places through school expansion and NFE, about 400,000 new places (resulting in increased enrollments of 285,000) were reported; there was no report on the number of places created though expanding NFE .

Improving learning achievement . For class 1, three years of program implementation was reported to boost scores in mathematics 28 percent over baseline and in language 11 percent; for class 3/4 the increases over baseline were 13 and 19 percent, respectively, for mathematics and language; at the end of the project the increase over the midterm level was 20 percent for both mathematics and language in class 1, and 45 and 35 percent for class 3/4 mathematics and language. There was much variation in these findings across districts and states . It was not clear from the ICR whether these findings were cross sectional (i.e., for class 1, data from class 1 at baseline and then class 1 three years later) or longitudinal (data on class 1 at baseline and data on the same cohort three years later (when they are in class 4). Moreover, because of differences between the baseline and final tests it was not possible to determine directly and conclusively whether the target of 25% improvement was reached. Finally, given no comparison group it is difficult to determine whether changes were related to the treatment or whether they were happening system wide.

Reducing school dropout . Dropout was reported to be below 10 percent in the state of Kerala only . In the districts in the states of Haryana, Maharastra, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu, average figures ranged from 20 to 40 percent and in the state of Assam over 40 percent. Since no baseline data on dropout were given in the ICR text and there were no comparison groups, it is not clear whether there have been changes in dropout that can be attributed to the project.

4. Significant Outcomes/Impacts:

The significant outcomes/impacts were:

- a strengthening of government commitments at all levels to increasing school access and quality;
- the development of a strong, layered support system for community -based quality improvement in education;
- the development of a management information systems and the determination (if not yet the skills) to use them for decision-making;
- demonstrated education system capacity to eliminate gender disparity in primary education access in most locations;
- breakthroughs in quality improvement through field -tested curricular/textbook revision and school-based inservice teacher training.

5. Significant Shortcomings (including non-compliance with safeguard policies):

Significant shortcomings were:

- weakness in the quality of data generated by the evaluation /information systems set up under the project, such that the impact of the Project on goal attainment was poorly documented; no basis for assessing whether access parity was achieved by scheduled castes and scheduled tribes .
- the low priority given to assessing the early childhood development pilot in the Project and the lack of data on subcomponent efforts and accomplishments;
- the lack of attention in Project supervision (e.g., in Joint Review Missions) to sector-wide policy issues and financial monitoring (as envisioned in SAR);
- relatively weak performance of the District Institutes of Education and Training in many districts .

6. Ratings :	ICR	OED Review	Reason for Disagreement /Comments
Outcome:	Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	[The ICR's 4-point scale does not allow for a "moderately sat." rating]. The Project set up a multilayered structure for monitoring and evaluation but failed to generate clear findings on the achievement of targeted results, especially concerning reducing access disparities and school drop-out. Lowering drop out rates appears to have been far below target.
Institutional Dev .:	Substantial	Substantial	

Sustainability :	Likely	Likely	
Bank Performance :	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	
Borrower Perf .:	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	
Quality of ICR :		Satisfactory	

NOTE: ICR rating values flagged with '*' don't comply with OP/BP 13.55, but are listed for completeness.

7. Lessons of Broad Applicability:

This Project made important contributions in showing :

- the power of strong government ownership of the various intervention strategies at all levels coupled with strong support from resident Bank professionals;
- the desirability of focusing on a few simple and measurable educational quality and access targets (results);
- the desirability of building local level institutions /channels to deliver services (block and cluster resource centers) supported professionally by existing entities at the district, state, and national levels;
- the positive impact of good analytical work during preparation coupled with the government's determination to foster change based on experience and field-based lessons;
- the decision to not to use international consultants, even when they might have helped in such things as improving data quality, reporting and use of outcomes, suggests that other ways beside the use of loan money should be explored as ways to make international expertise available to IDA supported projects .

8. Assessment Recommended? Yes No

Why? The scope of the seven DPEP projects in India (this Project plus the six others which have followed) is huge, allegedly effecting educational opportunities and outcomes among hundreds of thousands of children; nevertheless, real Project outcomes and impacts are obscured by poor quality of outcome data . It would be useful to get insight into the full impact of the Project and to understand more fully how complex, multi-layered networks of implementation and support can be energized .

9. Comments on Quality of ICR:

The ICR was generally satisfactory, but did also contribute to an unclear sense of Project effectiveness : a) by underrepresenting in its objectives statement points in the SAR about evaluation capacity (in state institutions and district DIETs) and quarterly progress reporting (DPOs), b) not including Outcome/Impact targets in its Annex 1, c) by its inadequate treatment of the poor quality of outcome data (e.g., failure to account for possible population changes in student enrollment tracking; failure to break down drop-out rate data and relate them to baselines; incomplete treatment of access parity for schedules castes and tribes; and lack of explanation for Project failure to ensure comparability between achievement results at baseline and end -of-project); and d) its cursory treatment of the results of the piloting in early childhood education .